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# More Poetry from OXFORD

Edited by  
WILLIAM BELL

*"Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound."*

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## NOTE

The Editor wishes to thank all those who have helped him to collect the following poems. He has tried to present a fair selection of the verse written by members of the University between 1944 and 1946.

One of these poems has appeared in *Poetry* (Chicago).

# William Bell

## ELEGY

TONIGHT the moon is high to summon ~~all~~  
the scholars, they who herald and who praise  
all things beneath the ruling moon—the shaming  
distempers of our blood, the rise and fall  
of history with every added tear ;—  
to summon all the trumpeters proclaiming  
    love from a higher sphere  
    whom they pursue beyond our gaze ;  
out of their dream of drowning to call them here  
to find the moonlit city they would raise.

Along the level sands, bathed by her beams  
the passionate men who wander by the sea  
pour to the waves the torrent of their troubles,  
their tears more cold than the Norwegian streams.  
Lear with marigolds in his silver hair  
follows the curve of the abandoned bubbles,  
    Tristram in his despair  
    watches the empty line of sky,  
and Timon as he sniffs the salty air  
curses the stench of all humanity.

Tonight I watched those lonely heroes weep  
the interruption of their own delight,  
and comforted myself : you are no woman  
if you would mourn a friend who fell asleep,  
charmed by the ocean's music, till the theme  
grew tyrannous, the trumpeter inhuman.

    I think he had his dream  
    without regretting, but tonight  
all men are carried on a freezing stream  
or wander weeping in the cold moonlight.

That moon could tell, we all must lie alone  
at last among the tides of time and space.  
Why do we mourn the dead? we do not pity  
the million ammonites transformed to stone  
and polished by the same unpitying hand  
that casts the carven fragments of a city  
like shells upon the sand.

Yet history's austere embrace  
has only covered him that he might stand  
far purer than the moon's inconstant face,

that he might stand before our Parthenon  
with every flaw we fancied washed away,  
so that the surging crowds of the forgiven  
may flow about his plinth, or climb upon  
the platform, gazing where his face appears,  
as if the crescent moon were fixed in heaven.

The tribute of your tears  
and tongues is all that you can pay;  
waters and songs tumble toward his ears  
to cover us tomorrow or today,

for this is the fulfilment of your dreams,  
desire that was as stealthy as a dew  
now openly from the obedient ocean  
summons his tide, and from the hills their streams.  
Now in the overflowing bay, among  
the drifting ships, leaping in their devotion  
a thousand dolphins throng,  
and with the same devotion you  
no longer flee the destroying flood of song,  
the music of the scholars, but pursue,

pursue the flowing trumpet till you see,  
more generous than the tritons of a spring,  
those steadfast heralds, drowned in blood and bleeding,  
who still proclaim : " the tide of history  
must drown the glittering city of the mind,  
but in remotest centuries receding  
    will leave a coast behind,  
    where once again the brooks will sing,  
where in his nets the fisherman will find  
a triton's marble mouth still trumpeting."

But do not watch the moon's enraging face.  
For all our folly nothing intercedes  
save only love. Love is another planet  
islanded in the purity of space,  
but there upon that island, torn or hewed  
or grown miraculously from the granite,  
    eternally pursued,  
    upon his saltire Andrew bleeds  
preaching to the obedient multitude,  
and the moon dips and drowns, but no man heeds.

# Raymond Chapman

HENRY VAUGHAN

Like a great seraph lost upon the earth  
He wandered, ever questing for the peace  
That breathed humility upon his birth,  
And spread in triumph at his soul's release.  
He broke the seal of mortal sense, and fled  
Across the gulf that opened where he trod,  
To hold unchallenged converse with the dead,  
And look at last into the eyes of God.  
Eternity was his, the stars grew cold  
While the dull mists dispersed before his eyes :  
He rose through fire and cloud-drift to behold  
The sign that bids the traveller arise,  
With faith to meet, majestic in the dusk,  
An angel walking on the banks of Usk.

## ADVENT SUNDAY

Each misty dawn-hour is a veiled awakening  
When other self, older perhaps than night,  
Stirs momentarily, not to the seeming body,  
But swept by questing pinions of light.

Not April dewy-fingered, July burning,  
Bring richer comfort to the unquiet bed ;  
With all their naked branches spread in worship,  
The woods are trembling at the Baptist's tread.

And through the darkness of the valley stealing,  
Where each man dreams his heaven or his hell,  
Comes in soft token of the morning's triumph  
The sound of the thrice-triple sacring bell,

From where, not robed in archetypal splendour,  
Heavy with gold or purple-hued as scorn,  
But hung in beggary above the altar,  
The dead Christ waits in silence to be born.

*IN MEMORIAM 1939-1945*

Surely the moon was horned to-night ; I moved  
Through silent forest paths, where every leaf  
Quivered in pale acknowledgment of grief :  
It was the shadow of the land you loved.

And all was shadow because you are dead,  
You who, more fair and gay in life than we,  
Greeted the ambassadors of destiny  
That cheat the palsied hand and wrinkled head.

We know not what fragility takes wing,  
What star-spun thread the angry guns destroy,  
That holds such plentitude of warmth and joy  
In the embrace of carrion festering.

Childlike our vain conceiving chides the air  
That does not break in fire when such men die ;  
Calm and immutable the heavens reply  
That you were wise, and sought no pity there.

Was it for some great evil long since done,  
Did snake-bound Furies triumph in your death—  
The vengeance of a Trojan's passing breath,  
Or of a weeping girl in Babylon?

Or greater yet and timeless, was it spoken  
Where unimagined depths of space extend,  
That need more vast than we can comprehend  
Requires a young life paid, an old heart broken?

Nights will be longer now, the dawning morrow  
Offers no shelter and no recompense  
Save this—for you release from failing sense,  
For us the healing questionings of sorrow.

## Antony Curtis

### *ANSTEY'S COVE*

Beyond the shell-brocaded sand  
The wounded moon along the tide  
Lets limping curves of light expand  
In clumsy pirouettes which ride  
Upon the unspoiled waltzing sea  
Sleek mussels lust on rocks beside  
That roaring choreography.

Upon the tongue of shore two still  
And coffin-silent questions are.  
The boy knows time has eyes which spill  
Wind-cracked lyrics reaching far  
Into the birth of mystery  
Which by knowing try to mar  
Or foil the royal dance of the sea.

"The waves explode their mist of ships  
But now I see only receding  
Dreams and my love's forgetting lips.  
Lady, explain your ceaseless treading  
Of the goat-trodden ignorant sands  
And the hoof-grazed moon whose light is bleeding  
In the deep valleys of your hands.

The night is guilty with meaning and  
They try, your moon-stained nails to stop  
Up my sore eyes with guilty sand.  
Our vows like papery ladders drop  
Sideways for morning's sun to bleach  
While blade-cheeked wavelets slope and strop  
Themselves upon the clinging beach.

Now conflict always, always dance,  
Worms grip, coil and forget the slime  
At their myth of the moon waves prance  
But only here in mounting rhyme  
Do dreams and to-morrow balance  
For I shall see no future time.  
The sea's mad conflict is its dance."

The words like shells shutter her eyes.  
The loaded waves implode no answer  
For the loved their moan gently dies,  
But from the challenged caverns of her  
Sleep comes the foam of prophecy  
A poised oar and distant murmur  
Of rivers nagging at the sea.

### *NIGHT PIECE: SLEEPING IN THE UNDERGROUND*

Last trains drum out the day's iambic dirge.  
In the long sculptured sleeve of the earth the liqe  
Of praying women come in silent surge  
Down smooth gliding stairs to sleep's grey hollow chine.  
Sleep, hear the imploring roar of those who live in  
Scaffolds of decay, the thirsty whose pails  
Contain only dust, who kneel in broken compline  
Invoking oblivion from the murmurous rails.  
Remember those who are skilled in the magic of birth,  
And those who have learnt the laws of death—all  
This night curled in the innermost curve of the earth.  
O soften sound from steel hysterical  
And coolness breathe, for in these concrete caves  
No muted distant dripping waterfall,  
Nor softening, as when the moon-mote laves  
In chill white ointment the snowman's crusting throat.  
Cool rhythm exhale here, where sleep is shortest,  
And unknown moss-moist stones, where old musicians wrote  
The haunting knowledge of the nimble flautist.  
Here, they know only for the day's battered  
Images to be drowned in the dream warm flesh seals;  
Until the globe of sleep is shattered  
By the metal recitative of the wheels. .



## A U B A D E

Now faintly falls the night's concussion  
Of booming hooves, the heart's percussion  
Dies, its hectic echoes break  
To vapours in the memory.  
The drummer's elbow slumps, the key  
Turns, and unlocks the light . . . we wake  
To flutes loquacious in the laiches,  
And to those white and fluid arches,  
Hoises, which saunter to the lake.

The jealous sea shall crave him, as he leaves  
Her clutch to join that singing on the shore.  
The waves' maternal rhythms softly roar,  
While he for cruel wounds of music grieves,  
And turns to where a chanting girl conceives  
Her current of desire, spoiled now no more  
By the lonely sweep of the heart's oar,  
Around his spreading limbs of coral weaves.

Her white and heaving sands, where moonlight bleeds,  
Across the trembling ribs of song, inveigh  
His ears, those whorled, slow turning shells of sound,  
From which the clinging surf recedes, recedes . . .  
O soon the silent boy must choose one way  
Of no return, to hear or to be drowned.

# Ian Davie

## *EASTER POEM, 1945*

Starlight absorbs  
The agony : His eyes  
Like jewels burn against the night.  
The stars chiselled to swordpoints glint  
Over His Head, bowed with its crown of thorns,  
And mountains to which distance is but a veil  
See God made visible by pain.

“ Father forgive  
They know not what they do.”  
Nor we nor they. Beholding the vast  
Composure of His crucifix  
We know that the last descent cannot be made  
Till the world has danced its frenzy to exhaustion  
And the slayer believed in the love of the slain.

## *PRAYER*

Almighty God, the blessed Trinity  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
God in Three Persons triumphing  
Over both sin and death,  
Accept our praise.

The Cross has made a garden of the desert.  
Help us to keep our inheritance,  
Praising Thee for the patient earth,  
The breath of air and water,  
The breath of fire.

Help us to praise Thee and Thy elements.  
Earth for the sowing, air for the growing,  
Water the making, fire the baking  
And Blood the breaking of bread.  
Through Jesus Christ.

*TRISTRAM AND ISOLT*

The thorn of jealousy and fear  
Is drawn : the skies  
Are empty—bright the rose :  
How sharp, how sweet its scent.  
Sealed are the tender eyes  
Of day and like a tear  
Music falls quietly on those  
Whom grief has made magnificent.  
In order to prolong  
The moment when evening yields  
To the intimacies of sleep  
They called on the magic properties of song.  
Hushed lay the fields,  
The lake unbreathed-upon did keep  
Strict counsel with the dead,  
And the soft wool  
Of clouds unravelled like a fleece was spread  
Light on their limbs. They felt  
The winds touch eager and cool  
And the curved hills around them seemed to melt.  
Time could not wean  
Their love from its charmed circle—nor despair.  
For the deviation of a hair between  
The clutch and the caress binds or sets free  
All those who in subservience of delight  
Together share  
At the still, serpent-hour of night,  
Love's terrifying ambiguity.

## D. S. Dearlove

### *FROM HEINE.*

Fortune is a wanton girl,  
Here only for today;  
She strokes away your straying curl,  
One hasty kiss and off! away!

Misfortune is a different hag,  
By you for life she sits,  
She's quite content to stay and nag.  
At night she watches you, and knits.

## Anthony de Hoghton

### *SESTINA*

Strike that rock for we are dry.  
Display the sun for we are dark,  
Call up the dance for we are still,  
In the music liquid shrill  
Contain the light that wakes the lark,  
The river of the weeping eye.

Look at us with the water's cye,  
To be unseen is to be dry;  
The waking light looks at the lark  
Asleep in ruffles of the dark;  
Astoundingly the fountain shrill  
Silvers the heavens that were still.

Disperse the shades that stand so still  
With your urgent golden eye;  
Dissolve their screeching thin and shrill,  
Their valediction mean and dry;  
Mantle them with billows dark  
In the singing of the lark.

The earth shall dance to greet the lark;  
The heavy trees that mute and still  
Endured the famine of the dark  
Shall flap like eagles in the eye  
That floods their feathers cold and dry  
With gushing music cool and shrill.

Heaven like a circus shrill  
Trains every creature by the lark  
To walk the rope above the dry  
Bowl of dust effete and still  
That starves the blinkered searching eye  
Of horses gleaming in the dark.

The river gurgles through the dark  
Mountain that with greeting shrill  
Salutes the primal morning eye  
With the honour of the lark,  
Honey-sweet ecstatic-still  
Exudation of feathers dry.

Now the river from the dark  
Eye of the mountain bubbles shrill:  
The still dry night is lost in the lark.

### *ONLY RIGHT AND PROPER*

When the ship went down the whorl  
The winking ocean shook for joy;  
The crabs advanced a courteous claw  
To greet Sir Ralph the pirate boy.

But he, with deprecating leer,  
Declined the accolade crustacean;  
A plaintive ringing in his ear  
Drew him to his destination.

The Abbot's bad the monks are bad  
They're happy in hell they swear;  
But Ralph the Rover they insisted  
Should come down and join them there.

## FAIRY TALES

With her finger in her mouth  
And wicked vistas in her eyes  
With a cone-crowned black hat askew  
And a silver scaled star in her hair  
The young witch the strong witch  
The raggle-taggle wood witch  
The dry stone wall witch  
The insect witch eats up the leaves

Bring a book and bring a candle  
Bring a ring and bring a thimble  
Bring a hairy honest boxer  
Bring a dapper little banker  
Bring a Bible-banging general  
Bring a drugged and braided admiral  
Watch the witch's spittle dribble  
Listen to her rapid nibble

The witch is wise the witch's eyes  
Coolly swim between the reeds  
Rest at last on blistered quays  
Thus do eyes of fish and spies

The fly is a dragon-fly  
And the dragon is a fly

## Alan Downs

### FRANCE.

And somewhere, somewhere  
Out of this dark and empty air  
There will be peace,  
And no soul crying  
And no soul saying  
With utter bitterness  
And world-wide loneliness  
That we have been betrayed.

Instead we will go home  
And loll around our room  
And speak of war,  
While there is hunger  
Miseries last longer  
And utter bitterness  
And society's wilderness  
And world-wide crying,  
And we are dying, dying.

## Geoffrey Galey

### ENGLISH DEAD

*(From the French of François Perché.)*

To you Englishmen fallen here in war  
And buried so hastily where you died,  
Whose numbers we shall know for evermore  
But by these mounds, your graves, that stretch so wide,  
There is one thing that we of France would say  
Now that you will remain so long our guests,  
Our guests of to-morrow and every day,  
The richest dust in France's earth that rests :  
" Allow us, kneeling in the grass to pray  
To make no more distinction in our prayer  
Between two peoples; ours is yours to-day;  
And if your exile is too hard to bear  
We'll pray that every day the wind shall bring,  
Like fresh-cut flowers, the breath of English spring."

## A. M. Graham

### MEDITATION

The stars tossed down their golden light  
And gilt the shimmering sea;  
And playing on the sand, the wavelets fight  
In generous fantasy,  
With green and glossy fingers pull  
The seaweed's salty hand,  
And high in scornful swirls the gull  
Rejects the wooing land.  
I, o'er the shining plain of salt  
Horizon-scanning, think;  
And with the sight my heart exalt  
And into dreaming sink. . . .

So deep within me at a red  
And rose-radiant lotus-flower  
I gazed; and God in silence said,  
" Mine, is it mine this hour? "  
And I: " To Thee is dedicate  
The peaceful colonnade  
Within this temple, far from hate  
And ancient jealousies: thought-made  
And silent are my pillared halls,  
My painted porticoes,  
Where Love's light footstep only falls. . . .  
Who knows me, ah! Who knows? "

\* \* \* \* \*

The barriers of stillness banish Earth. . . .  
An island sailing for a million years  
Through jet-walled cavernous domains I seem,  
Floating on God, divine encirclement;  
And Time, the current, guides me on. Within  
This temple no one comes, yet all are here:  
And happiness, as incense on a censer, burns.

\* \* \* \* \*



But to my lotus-pond a bee  
Flies, drowsy diunkard, nectar-full;  
An over-laden cargo-ship.  
Below the depths are green and cool;  
He, flattered by reflection, sinks  
And tears the vision from my pool.

### *ALMOND-FLOWERS*

Blown from the blushing  
Almonds in Spring,  
Cataracts rushing,  
Cumber and cling  
Fast to the shining water.

Sailing along to a  
Watery death,  
Gusts, that belong to a  
Zephyrlet's breath,  
Hurtle my almond-flowers.

Blown past my window  
Hardly they ask  
Pardon for sin, though  
Easy the task . . .  
Sin, not to tarry longer.

## W. J. Harvey

### ODE.

Poet, in his eternal labour, his wrestling with words,  
snatches from time a moment, the still flight of birds  
    through motionless skies;  
and in his rhyme their beauty petrifies,  
    the grace of their flight is frozen,  
they are perpetual in their loveliness.

Or painter, catching the swell and curve of a wave,  
the sharp escarpment running to sunlight, the grave  
    poise before topple and fall,  
stills in his art that movement; all  
    the endless surge of the sea  
gathers there; it becomes all oceans.

O had we that alchemy, that distilling power  
to take and keep always from the human hour  
    the moment of our delight,  
and from the too-short night  
    detach and make permanent  
our love, that precious and rare element.

### JERVIS BAY

Arose at sunrise when skies were cloudy and green,  
drank of the sun's rays liquid and cool as milk,  
    later it rained and the barbs of the shower  
    burned, and the thistles of rain  
were burring and furring the sheen of the water's face;  
    to live seemed good at that hour  
of sunshine and rain and knowing the morning could  
    never be so again.

Lips of white water licked at the cliffs, and crumbling  
fell back in a welter and scurry of foam,  
like lamb's fleece cloaked mountains and capes of the waves  
in their purposeless flux; buff also;  
shaggy, hump-shouldered, they jostled and charged  
endlessly shorewards, faltering and tumbling  
knelt down each one where the sand dunes curved  
and swerved round, silver and bleached by the sun.

And swept down to meet them, down from the hills  
another green sea, like waves the larches and firs  
mounted and rode the slope and steep of the land,  
caught there the sunlight their wet boughs glistened,  
and between the green oceans, sand  
gleamed like a sword-blade, frayed and jagged  
where the ragged sea notched its keen edge,  
shone, cleaving wave from tree.

So for an hour at sunrise when the morning washed  
cool with wet light the bay, I lay  
silent through sun's flood and the whip-edged rain,  
feeling the blood mount in my veins  
like a fire in the heart or a perfect song,  
long after dawn had swollen to full day  
the joy remained, and the sadness, knowing that hour  
could never be so again.

*ON THE SILENCE OF FATHER MANLEY HOPKINS, S.J.*

Should heart hang so, in darkness suspended  
so long, Lord? And mouth that sang beauty  
made dumb, and eye that saw blended  
in all things thy gloiy be by will blinded?

Should the world of thy Word whirl away, vanish,  
and the spring of thy love fail, never replenish  
the soul with the sight of thee, rather all night see  
nothing but nothingness?

O splendid  
thy advent, yes, but those barren years, hollow  
the heart there, harrowed it lay fallow,  
wanting the seed, the fire of thy grace.  
Seven years of silence, Lord, waiting thy word he sought  
thee and fought, from the fighting wrought  
beauty, struck from the struggle the image of thy face.

## J. D. James

### LAMENT FOR A POET

*"And all the poets of summer  
Must lament another spirit's passing over."*

SIDNEY KEYES.

I speak remembering his song, who moved  
In life so easily among the dead,  
Wordsworth, and Byrd, and Yeats, and comforted  
Poor mad John Clare.

Who found and strangely loved  
The fatal desert: was it not his land?  
Had he not built its landscape of his fear,  
Set Youth and Death and sad girls dancing there,  
Before Death beckoned from the burning sand?

An understanding spirit might discover  
A way to make these midnight shadows part:  
Voices might come, as the tall twin candles shiver,  
And in the listening room his live words hover  
Of the gold song-bird or the iron lover,  
Ghosts of a ghost, and of his lonely heart.

### POEM FROM LONDON

Not this December evening, when the sun  
glares weakly red behind the city mist:  
how should I, O how sing now in this damp,  
how tell her April beauty here? I cannot stir  
nor bring to life the shadows of the past.

I cannot tell. The air is chill  
and seeps along the backstreets of the night.  
How should I speak her glory as a madrigal  
how form again forgotten melody  
or urge the sordid darkness to a song?

Somewhere the Moon is rising that I love;  
the rabbit runs his track across the frost.  
Somewhere she moves in fields of evening,  
and time, and almost time is lost  
where there the mists clothe her,  
whose path lies straight through Winter into Spring.

### ZONE LIBRE

*(From the French of Louis Aragon.)*

The fade-out of a sorrow past  
The broken heart is eased at last  
The ember turns to white  
A gentle wine the summer seemed  
All August in Corrèze I dreamed  
In a château warm with light

Was it the wind that on a sudden  
Passed thus reproachful through the garden  
Deep sobbing on the air  
Oh do not waken me too soon  
A single moment of this tune  
May scatter my despair

And once it seemed that there was borne  
The noise of battle through the corn  
To my uncertain ears  
Whence came such grief how should I tell  
Did pink or rosemary still smell  
With bitterness of tears

Somehow I lost that memory  
Of darkness and of agony  
The shadows of my shame  
I sought no longer to unearth  
My grief and its forgotten birth  
And then September came

My love within your arms I lay  
And someone sang not far away  
An ancient song of France  
Then from the silence I awoke  
As like a foot its echoes broke  
The green pool of my trance.

### *RICHARD LIONHEART*

*(From the French of Louis Aragon.)*

If the whole world is like these barracks here  
At Tours in France where we are penned  
If foreigners now plough our lucern fields  
If day drags on without an end

Must I then keep the reckoning of each hour  
An alien hatred learn to understand  
When in our hearts we cannot feel at home  
Is this my land is this my native land

I must not watch the swallow as she sings  
Her dialect forbidden to the sky  
Nor watch the passing of the faithless cloud  
Old ferryman of dreams of times gone by

I must not hum the tune I so much love  
And what I think I must not say  
Even the silence we have learned to doubt  
The sunshine as the rainy day

Though they are few and we are powerless  
We sufferers we know each other well  
In vain they seek to make the night more dark  
The prisoner makes a song within his cell

A song as pure as coolest water is  
White in the way our bread once used to be  
A song that soars above the infant's bed  
So high and fine the shepherds come and see

The shepherds sailors and wise public men  
The carters scholars and the butchers hear  
Jugglers with words makers of images  
The women in the crowded market square

The men of commerce and of industry  
Makers of steel and cloth and linenware  
The blackfaced miners and the climbers of  
Telegraph poles O everyone shall hear

It does not matter by what names they are known  
All Frenchmen now are bearing Blondel's part  
And Freedom like the sound of rustling wings  
Answers the song of Richard Lionheart.



## R. I. Kidwell

### *THE TASK*

The madman sits with torrid whirling eye  
In one black corner of an empty hall,  
He dips his toenail in his bright red blood  
And scratches hieroglyphics on the wall.

He draws his doubts in letters seven-feet high  
He writes his hopes and fears in endless lists,  
He traces worries in the viscous mud  
He knows one thing and that is, he exists.

His task is to explain the reason why;  
The blank sheet mocks his slowly-glazing eye.

### *CONFLICT*

The bountiful sky and the twinkling sand,  
The mermaids' song and the fronded leaves,  
A youth and a maiden hand-in-hand,  
    Are the measure of life—  
    And the measure of love.

A cancerous corpse in a sluggish stream,  
A mad abortionist's rusted knife,  
A machine-gun spilling the words of a dream  
    Are the measure of life—  
    And the measure of love.

And these two profiles intertwined,  
The best and the worst in the hand of Fate,  
And these two joined in the human mind,  
    Are the measure of life—  
    And the measure of love.

## Francis King

### *DESERTERS*

Turning our faces to the hills, we crept  
Out of the silent camp, while still in dreams  
Of home and happiness our comrades slept :  
Strange how forlorn and pitiable they seemed.  
And so, the old man leaning on my shoulder,  
We left the valley and began to climb  
Upwards and upwards, out of space and time;  
With every breath we took the air grew colder.  
But we were free. At last, before us lay  
The mountains with their glimmering peaks of snow  
And the sheer track by which we planned to go.  
Would it be possible? We turned to say  
A last farewell to those we left below,  
Then, with abounding love, resumed our way.

### *THE JOURNEY*

Moving along that leaden track, I saw  
Horses and cattle in the peaceful meadows.  
Each image gleamed complete, without a flaw,  
The sky reposed above a sky of roses.  
But then the whole scene tumbled into shadows,  
The beasts, the roses, and the sky reposing.  
  
The journey had begun. And there were voices  
Which told enchanting lies. And there were hands  
Which raised their stigmata, and children's faces  
On which were branded characters of doom.  
O there were red leaves falling in the wind  
And leaves that filled the quiet of my room.  
  
The night was bandaged in hot scarves of fire  
While Leda gave her secrets to the swan.  
The sulky bird and man had their desire.  
The sky became the floor for that caress.  
I saw the ripe seeds falling, one by one,  
The progeny was vast, was numberless.

There were enchanting voices. There were boys  
Beneath that suicidal rain of leaves  
Who wooed the bird in jagged alley-ways.  
Candles there were, and diabolic singing,  
And unshrived presences for whom none grieved,  
And tears, and anger, and alarums ringing.

Friends then seemed far from me, but near each other,  
Their dangers made them close, O strangely close,  
Their own diversity had made them brothers.  
Should I have been their comrade? But the will  
Forbade acceptance, and the iron voice  
Murmured again, again : You must not kill.

This was the journey. To the frozen North  
Above the soundless lakes, the corridors  
Of snow and ice, my conscience sent me forth.  
There had been birds, and bird-tormented places,  
There had been friends. But now on alien shores  
All things seemed far and strange, all sounds, all faces.

I thought of all my enemies, and those  
Who were my friends. My vast and polar room  
Still burned with love for them, for all who chose  
What I could never choose. Beloved friends,  
Beloved enemies, they knew their doom.  
But where would my ignoble journey end?

## GERMINAL

And now the Spring. The peevish breezes vex  
Bulbs that are thrust before the equinox.  
Ambition and the cruel flux of love  
Burn black and deep, imprisoned in a mirror  
Whose one reflection is the season's terror,  
Nor can we sate ourselves, or cry enough.

The sky is curdled, buds dissolve in glue,  
We bruise the meadows that we trample through.  
Dead tubers blossom into feet and hands  
While on earth's patient breast whose veins are danger,  
Still cracked, still withered by the winds of anger,  
The ulcer wreathes itself in flowers and fionds.

O tomb-tormented, rising from his sleep,  
The buried stranger has begun to creep.  
Blood flows on leaves and limbs. He snaps the sheath  
Which holds him captive from the curious light.  
Brute frenzy and the bestial drum await  
His advent at this hour of birth and death.

Rib of ourselves, whom once we fed upon,  
Now have you clothed your crumbled skeleton,  
Till every vein and sinew germinates.  
O dying boy whom our indifference slew  
Your bones have sprouted where we covered you,  
You come to punish and make desolate.

The Winter gave you sour roots of food :  
You would have loved us in your servitude.  
Gentle, the weakly son, who knew no hope,  
You asked for sanctuary, you begged for bread,  
But now you will not see us comforted.  
You come with turbulence, with barbarous rape.

We should oppose the tyrant. Yet the will  
Cannot control its secret oracle  
Which thrusts him yearly from the labouring soil.  
Now dense with sweat, now dark with menaces  
He drags the seething burden of his thighs  
Across our passive flesh. The huge seeds fall.

## John Longrigg

### *P O E M*

So fades the ambiguous vision  
That never was enchanted;  
Though perhaps when a late sun slanted  
On your temple, some decision

Took the wrong predestined turning.  
A frond of hair was playing  
Over your temple, saying  
"Too early for the autumn burning,

The harvest-home fruition,  
The logic of stability."  
We lose in sensibility  
Our passion's intuition.

### *E X I L E*

No time to love;  
Lost in the urgent silence,  
Groping blindly for half-pence  
Under the table.

Silent above,  
Wings leaves clouds are arrogant.  
I must make darkness pleasant  
Who am not able.

Learn to accept  
This frightened reasoned impotence,  
This boring tyranny of common-sense  
My heart resented.

Will be adept  
To love familiar ugly things;  
Will teach my heart to clip its wings,  
And be contented.

### SONNET

Nothing can die completely. As a child  
I heard the rain come gliding down the night.  
By morning the lawn was a swamp; but the wild  
Undergrowth was sibilant with delight,  
And rain drops fell like whispers in the wood.  
They had their own secrets; the little boy  
Was not asked to the party, only half understood  
His pity and envy for the unshared joy.  
To-day my brain is clamorous with the dead,  
Who grope and talk and fumble round the dark  
Backstreets of feeling where no signposts mark  
The road to coherent sanity; my head  
A troubled graveyard where my dead friends move  
And share no more their wisecracks or their love.

### P O E M

And when I go to bed  
My thoughts are so many white sails  
That scurry  
Over the harbour-mouth, and across  
Calm water gather and ease to the pier.

And all the things I've said  
Are so many bright hard long nails  
That hurry  
To your hands your feet your cross  
Built on any old hill by any old fear.

## *P O E M*

In this green and sterile December  
When tenderness is a sleeping partner  
In the trees' austere councils and confabulations  
I remember our other moments together  
In a country without logic and without explanations.

In this sterile and horrible December  
I think that only you could give life to winter  
And colour to the metallic evergreens and impotent fields,  
That only you could lead me further  
Into a country without trumpets without banners without shields.

In this horrible and green December  
I remember watching the street-lamps saunter  
Round and above the calm landscape of your lit face.  
O and I think this disastrous December  
An enchanted moment pendent in immense space.

## *CASUALTY*

Quite unshy,  
With the extreme deliberation of despair  
He watched his life go gurgling down the drain.  
Collecting facts like coconuts at a fair  
He felt them jostle unwanted round his brain—

The symmetry  
Of the branch that leaned over him; the second-hand  
Of his watch revolving slower than before  
There'd been a noise and he'd fallen down; the bland  
Assurance of the sun. His leg felt stiff and sore.

Ask him why  
This had to happen, he could tell you only  
It was expected, usual; that afternoon  
He'd drunk with his friends and now was suddenly lonely;  
That death was too much with us late and soon.

### *LONDON POEM*

And now in London after two years absent  
I concede myself a modest Jubilate  
For the grave curve of the street, the kind people.

I pinch myself and know that I'm alive.

Not coming with bitter atonement,  
Nor as some in a passion of holiness  
To purge the evil, build the ruined steeple,

But glad to be back and lucky to be alive.

### *PEASANT GIRL*

And you that pass me with your black  
Hair swirling over your shoulder, a crimson  
Scarf round your neck, walking  
With the confidence, the tiresome attractive  
Cockiness of a precocious child,  
Your brown eyes enormous with charity.

You could have your myth, like Narcissus  
Who, looking into the talking water,  
Became despite himself a figure of tragedy.

But you will prefer contentment to the austere  
Plainsong of beauty; the lit fire, the fuggy room,  
The squealing children to the black clouds  
Massing passionately on the groaning mountain.

You will grow fat and smell of garlic  
Who now walk like a young tree walking.



## David Luke

### *EPIGRAPH FOR RIMBAUD*

Ever from pure enfolding rose  
he travels farther and too far  
and still to the forgotten star  
in a perpetual memory goes.  
How shall he find the way he knows  
to where the ice-white angels are,  
when in the sea his thirst unbar,  
the fire-guarded gates unclose?  
Westwards have come through rocks of pain  
and peril all his lives in flight  
now over death to sail again  
and of his garden come in sight  
who with the rising sun has lain  
beyond the circle of the night.

### *SESTINA FOR THE MOON*

*Sov og drom du, gutten min.*

Seeking their summer now intent like birds  
I have sent thoughts out south of the fixed season  
for softer land and from the ice-dark shadows  
or falling short for ever of the moon  
shot feathered love upon that enemy  
from so weak string wishing so strong their flight.

There is a singing beyond all the heart's flight  
and distant innocence of wild white birds  
gleams over mountains, where no enemy  
may penetrate to tear apart their season :  
they are the holy children of the moon  
living for ever at the far side of shadows.

O light remembered, clove-scented shadows  
circles of laughter and the hands in flight  
diving of love deeper than sun or moon !  
How heave off horror of these roaring birds  
break the embraces of this heavy season  
ever elude the damp coiled enemy?

Grinning at corners lurks the enemy  
close to the door and multiple in shadows  
barring the lovely unrecaptured season :  
from his flesh and his bones there is no flight.  
only of vainly wheeling phantom birds  
over the sea's edge wailing for the moon.

Terrible huntress, calm far-spearing moon  
mourn for the stricken not your enemy  
who envious of animals and birds  
hid to spy on his death from the green shadows •  
call off the dogs his fear and endless flight  
come and with kisses wake our buried season !

Lately a messenger of the dream-season  
brought word from palaces behind the moon,  
more beautiful than any eagle his flight :  
he with his love could slay the enemy  
his flame unlock the prisoner of shadows  
but he came no nearer, pausing among birds.

This is the season of the enemy  
my flight is broken who would reach the moon  
birds mock me where I lie among the shadows.

## THREE SEASCAPES

### I.

Sovereignly, so silently  
steal your waters over me :  
all my wishes laid aside  
float upon your rising tide.

Salt wind murmurs, sea-wind moans  
in the hollow of my bones,  
in the tangle of my hair  
tells of stars and fishes rare.

In your caverns I would lie  
hours or ages pass me by :  
shrieking birds and breakers know  
where I lived, a world ago.

### II.

Island waiting late and early  
wild your mountain, white your river.  
Shine and shower are in me.

On the veined and shifting sea  
light is glass to fall and shiver.  
Island waiting late and early

Light breaks like a branching tree  
downwards, where the white birds hover.  
Shine and shower are in me,

and a mist mysteriously  
over us is hung for ever.  
Island waiting late and early.

dark your castle, dead is he  
whom you beckoned back, your lover :  
shine and shower are in me :

woof of waves his sheet shall be  
rainbow-ring his home discover  
Island waiting late and early  
shine and shower are in me.

### III.

#### *THE PREVIOUS LIFE*

*(From Baudelaire.)*

Long while beneath vast porticoes I dwelt :  
sea-sunlight stained them with a thousand fires  
and in the evening their tall stately pillars  
made them like basalt-caverns to behold.  
The surging waves wore the sky's images  
and with harmony solemn and occult  
into their rich almighty music mingled  
the sunset's colours mirrored on my eyes.  
There did I live in a voluptuous calm  
amid azures and splendours of the sea :  
sweet-scented naked slaves surrounded me  
who fanned my forehead cool with fronds of palm  
and for all care were curious to know  
my secret wound and why I languished so.

#### NOCTURNE

I saw a gallows on the moon :  
who must hang there, who must hang so soon?

I saw a prison in the sky :  
what prisoner waits there to die?

I saw a judge come on a cloud :  
whose sentence did he cry so loud?

I saw a jury sitting near :  
what verdict did the whole world hear?

I saw a clerk stand by my bed :  
and heard the accusation read.

## *DAEMON*

Follow him, the desired and difficult,  
whose whisper freezes and whose movements melt,  
whose airy house a thousand eagles built.

Watch him who danced upon the fawning sea,  
who kissed the ice and set the lions free,  
and mocked the mountains with his perjury.

Cry out, for he has cracked a whip of stars,  
drops from his hands dragons and meteors :  
and our weeping is laughter in his ears.

## *MUSICIAN*

In a trance of silver, she  
pressing keys of ivory  
had unlocked the ivory gate :  
these were dreams she set afloat.

I had left the iron land  
naked in a husk of sound,  
and on an uncharted calm  
under her pilot fingers swam.

## *LUNATIC*

Monthly I meet this sad lady,  
the wonder-pale, the dapple-white :  
her tears are cold, two horns has she  
and lows her losses through the night.

The dragon-boy, drawing moon-milk,  
lay swathèd in her arms of silk :  
what violent hand broke through his rest  
and plucked him from her silver breast?

He was more precious and more strange  
than all the stars around her head :  
and she will not be comforted,  
though she have heaven in exchange.

## *PROPHECY*

The killers came from the mountains,  
the victims groaned by the lake :  
tears poisoned the fountains :  
the killers came from the mountains  
to keep the world awake.

The rivers run down the valleys :  
I heard one speak of when  
all things shall have grown careless,  
the rivers run down the valleys,  
and the world sleep again.

# Hans Werner Cohn

## GEBET

Der du in der Frage bist  
nicht in Ruhm und Klage bist  
Vene in der Weltenhaut  
bald erblasst und bald erblaut :

wie sie dich verleugnen  
wenn sie dich benennen  
wie sie dich enteignen  
wenn sie dich bekennen

wie mit Wunschtraumfetzen  
sie dich frech verkleiden  
wie sie dich vergoetzen  
um dich zu beneiden

wie sie dich berauben  
wenn sie dich verguelden  
wie sie dich verbilden  
um dich zu erglauben :

der du in der Frage bist  
nicht in Ruhm und Klage bist  
Vene in der Weltenhaut  
bald verblasst und bald verblaut.

# David Luke

*(From Hans Werner Cohn.)*

## PRAYER

You who dwell in doubtfulness  
far from blame and far from praise  
vein in the world's skin are you  
turning white and turning blue.

How they all deny you  
who by names address you  
how their words destroy you  
soon as they confess you

how with rags of fancy  
rashly they disguise you  
and to feed their envy  
how they idolise you

how they rob and stint you  
gilding you in homage  
in how poor an image  
striving to invent you

you who dwell in doubtfulness  
far from blame and far from praise  
vein in the world's skin are you  
turning white and turning blue.



# Hans Werner Cohn

## *EIN ALTER MANN SPRICHT IN FRUHLING :*

Den blauen Himmel streichelt zarter Rauch.  
Der Frühlingswind föhnt das verschlafne Haar.  
Die Sonnenwange zeigt noch wenig Blut.  
Begehrlich bebt das seidenglatte Blatt.  
Geputzte Plätze warten weiss und leer.  
Die Mädchen locken durch geblühtes Tuch.

Doch meine Seele ist ein schwarzes Tuch  
und flattert ungebleicht vom lichten Rauch  
der aus den Flüssen steigt : verlassen leer. . .  
Die Sonne segnet nicht mein dürres Haar.  
Mein Herz entlaubt sich langsam, Blatt um Blatt  
und wünscht sich einer Biike grünes Blut.

Wie träg und herbstlich kreist mein müdes Blut :  
auf meiner kalten Haut verwelkt das Tuch.  
Ich warf das letzte unbeschriebne Blatt  
in den Kamin : die Glut erstarb in Rauch.  
Die greise Bürste spreizt ihr schüttres Haar  
und die Karaffe blinzelt verstaubt und leer.

Das Meer der Träume gähnt mir öd und leer.  
Einst griff mir seine wilde Hand ins Blut  
und trieb mein Herz tief in Undines Haar. . .  
Nun liegt es zahm : ein schäbig-grünes Tuch  
auf einem Gartentisch berusst vom Rauch  
herbstlicher Feuer. Trägt ein hohles Blatt.

Ach meine Hand die wie ein braunes Blatt  
an losem Stile hängt ist leer ist leer  
und was sie hielt zerstob in Wind wie Rauch.  
Nur die geheime Schuld befleckt wie Blut  
mir meines Lebens dünngetragenes Tuch  
auf das mein Lieben fiel wie totes Haar.

Die Sonne wärmt mit mütterlichen Haai  
die alte Mauer und das junge Blatt.  
Ich fröstle unter ihrem goldnen Tuch  
und starre in den Spiegel : er ist leer.  
Der grosse Magier besprach mein Blut :  
ich wurde blass und körperlos wie Rauch. . .

Ein weicher Rauch liebkost der Wiese Haai.  
Smaragden pulst das süsse Blut im Blatt.  
Von mir fällt Frühling leer wie altes Tuch.

## David Luke

*(From the German of Hans Werner Cohn.)*

### *AN OLD MAN SPEAKS IN SPRING*

The blue sky is caressed by tender smoke.  
The warm spring wind is ruffling sleepy hair.  
The sun's complexion is still scant of blood,  
and tremulous with lust the silk-smooth leaf.  
The squares are waiting, neat and white and empty,  
and girls alluring through their flowered cloth.

But my soul is a piece of sable cloth,  
fluttering, not whitening in the luminous smoke  
that rises from the streams : forlorn and empty. . .  
The sun-god will not bless my barren hair.  
My heart loses its foliage, leaf by leaf,  
and envying the birch-tree its green blood.

In autumn dullness my exhausted blood  
circulates : and on my cold skin the cloth  
withers. Now I have thrown the last blank leaf  
into the fire; the glow faded in smoke.  
The senile brush spreads out its scanty hair  
and the decanter winks, dusty and empty.

**M**y sea of dreams yawns desolate and empty :  
**w**hose violent hand invaded once my blood,  
**h**unted my heart into Undina's hair. . .  
**N**ow it lies docile : a green shabby cloth  
**o**n a garden table thick with soot from smoke  
**o**f autumn fires. Bears a hollow leaf.

**A**las my hand, hanging like a brown leaf  
**o**n a loose stalk, is empty, it is empty !  
**a**nd all it held gone with the wind like smoke.  
**O**nly the stain of secret guilt, like blood,  
**p**ollutes my life, this long-worn threadbare cloth  
**w**here my loving has fallen like dead hair.

**H**ow warm the sun, our mother, spreads her hair  
**o**ver the old stone wall and the young leaf !  
**I** shiver underneath her golden cloth  
**a**nd stare into the mirror : it is empty.  
**T**he great magician has bewitched my blood :  
**I** have turned pale and bodiless as smoke.

**S**oftly the smoke fondles the meadow's hair.  
**E**merald blood beats sweetly in the leaf.  
**S**pring falls from me like an old empty cloth.

## W. Whitmore Mellor

### *P A M I R*

The chilly sun  
Thrown back to blind me by the frigid snow,  
Shone on the meditant peaks that breathed the sky;  
And the blaspheming wind  
Howled at me, persecuting, shrieking  
Its hatred of my purpose.

I did not know my purpose :  
I only knew a strangely fragrant image;  
The vision of a deep and sheltered valley  
Hung from the mountains, where the torrents drop  
Through iron ravines and melancholy pines.

But still I knew  
It was an image; and that a frozen death  
Waited in some inevitable chasm  
Where I should lie, under complacent snow,  
Mourned by the evil voices of the wind.

And yet I did not turn;  
The wind shrieked wildly; but I could not turn.

### *GHOSTS*

We who murmured in the silent graveyard  
lit by the moon's corpse in the occult forest  
beside the empty chapel where the bats live;

We who whispered fear in the moaning night wind;  
we who filled the wilderness with wailing  
lamentation for the wasted city's ruins;

We, the ancient voices of the darkness,  
degenerate to childish superstitions  
ridiculous to your sophistication.

We are the jokes of radio comedians,  
experiments for psychical research,  
the curse of agents selling haunted houses.

You ridicule us in the sceptic sunlight  
and laugh beneath the warm electric lamps;  
but when the lights go out you still remember;

In the loneliness of darkness you remember,  
hearing the aching crying of the owl,  
your primitive uncomprehended terror;

the chilly wind around the empty tomb.

### *HERACLITUS*

He has concealed his soul in blazing darkness;  
And as the ancient elemental flames  
Form from their chaos of empyrean fury  
A moment's image of a flickering world,  
He hears their wild eternity of music  
And sings their strange intolerable song.

Beyond the formless beach, the murmuring ocean  
Waits for the time to creep nearer the sand,  
Reclaiming its jetsam and forgotten shells:  
And the wind cries loneliness about the shore  
And sings its memories of ancient songs;  
The melodies of vanished sirens, drowned  
In an atlantic Lethe. Out at sea  
The buoy rolls passively upon the swell.  
I think I shall always wait here, with my sorrow:  
Wait for a drifting death beyond the tide-mark,  
And the final cry across the empty waters  
While the grey sea engulfs my memories  
And casts my battered grief upon the shore.

## J. G. Moir

### *SILENT FLIGHT*

*(In Memoriam Valery Tchkalov.)*

Above the stooks of newly-gathered wheat,  
Upborne on waves of heat the glider soars;  
With nature only now the pilot wars;  
Each fight he wins means nobody's defeat.  
All the late summer landscape at his feet  
Lies shaped in golden cornfields, pastures green;  
—A strand of deep, rich colours; oh how keen  
His hawk-eyes are, that all this kindly greet.  
Only the swish of air and the soft-tuned  
Voices of nature into his quiet tumble  
Or float; while cloud-towers, all the while, above him  
Move on in mighty sequence, form, and crumble.  
Surely in mercy only is he marooned,  
This peaceful hero; surely all-gods love him.

### *THE CYNIC'S HYMN TO SATAN*

Slick salesman of eternal ruin and death,  
Polished high-priest of uncreative passion,  
Whose voice is vicious whine of shells, whose breath  
Green gas; oh sneering devotee of fashion;  
Satan, we crown you Emperor of Earth.

Oh you who smile among the lamplit streets  
Where fawning pimps and prostitutes foregather,  
And cackle when the nation's council meets  
To hear no brothels mentioned in their blather;  
Satan, we crown you Monarch of our Mirth.

Oh blue-eyed graduate of Hell's Saint-Cyr,  
Passed first from all the Sandhursts of perdition;  
Pilot, whose Devilry disdains all fear,  
Whose Spitfire has a roving, mad commission;  
Satan, we crown you Captain of our Host.

Oh black-robed preacher of proud unbelief  
Whose grasp of evil dogma never falters;  
We hail you, who have loosed the bonds of grief  
For those who bow before your darkened altars;  
Satan, we crown you Cardinal of the Lost.

Teach us the sweet technique of fleshly sin,  
That we may suck the ultimate drop from pleasure;  
That we may feel fierce energy within,  
To mine each hill which hides a worldly treasure;  
Satan, slay our hypocrisy and shame.

Teach us to keep the mocking smile of youth,  
Teach us to march erect in bitter weather;  
Teach us to scale the granite crags of truth,  
Teach us to goad the dying gods together;  
Satan, lead us to victory in your name!

### SONNET

*(From the French of Ronsard.)*

As we see on the branch, in May, the rose  
In youthful loveliness and blossom new  
Make heaven jealous of her radiant hue,  
When the first tear of dawn upon her flows :

Grace in her petals and kind love repose,  
Scattering trees and lawns with fragrance sweet;  
But struck by rain or by excessive heat,  
Drooping in death her faded blooms she strows :

Thus in the prime days of your youthfulness,  
When heaven and earth admired your loveliness,  
You turned to ashes, slain by Fate's decree.

For obsequies receive my tears' sad showers,  
This bowl of milk, this basket full of flowers,  
That, e'en dead, nought but roses you may be.

## SONNET

*(From the French of Ronsard.)*

When you are old, and, in the firelight's glare,  
By candle-glow your skeins of wool you string,  
You'll read my verse, and say, awondering,  
" Ronsard used praise me, when I—once—was fair."

Then shall your servant, dozing in her chair,  
Tired out with toil, hear the glad, marvellous thing,  
And at the sound of " Ronsard " up shall spring,  
To bless your name with praise no years impair.

I shall have left this world, and, ghost at ease,  
Shall be at rest among cool myrtle-trees :  
You'll be an old, bent dame, whom memory's knife

Stabs with my love and with your proud disdain ;  
Oh wait not till the morrow, think again :  
Cull from to-day the roses of this life.

## SONNET

*(From the French of Du Bellay.)*

Blest hills, and you, ruins of holy fame,  
That hold the solitary title, Rome ;  
You, aged monuments, where still has home  
The dust-strewn praise of many a godlike name :

Triumphal arches, rising near heaven's dome,  
Whom even high Olympus views with wonder,  
Slowly a heap of ashes you become,  
The people's legend, and the public plunder !

And even though for a time the buildings war  
'On time, yet is it time's unmoved intent  
That works and names at length shall be no more.

My sad desires, live you then content :  
For if Time things so mighty does not spare,  
He'll also end the misery I bear.



## ECSTASY

*(From the French of Victor Hugo.)*

I was alone near the waves, upon a starry night,  
No cloud was in the sky, at sea no sail in sight;  
Of worlds beyond this world the view to me was given :  
And the woods and the hills, and Nature's mighty whole,  
Murmuring confusedly, with questions seemed to hail  
The sea's waves, and the waves of heaven.

And all that mighty host, the stars of shining gold,  
Said, as they all bowed down their coronets of fire,  
And the blue waves, whom nought controls and nought arrests,  
Said, as they all bent down the white foam of their crests,  
" It is the Lord, 'tis the Lord God, our Sire."

## SONNET: CORRESPONDENCES

*(From the French of Baudelaire.)*

Nature's a fane from whose quick masonry  
A confused sound of voices sometimes trembles;  
Man journeys thither through a wood of symbols  
That all observe him with familiar eye.

Like echoes long-protracted which from far  
Confound their notes in dark, deep unity  
That has both day's and night's immensity,  
Sounds, colours, perfumes,—all are similar.

There are perfumes fresh as the flesh of boys,  
Soft-toned as oboes, green as meadow-grass,  
—And others, rich, corrupt, revelling in sin,

And having the nude candour of infinite space,  
Like amber, musk, incense and benjamin,  
That sing the soul's and body's highest joys.

## THE ALBATROSS

*(From the French of Baudelaire.)*

Often, for their amusement, mariners  
Take captive albatrosses, huge sea-birds,  
That trail, like lazy fellow-voyagers,  
The vessel gliding over angry voids.

But scarcely have they set them down on deck,  
Than, clumsy and ashamed, these kings of air,  
Mournfully let each mighty wing go slack  
And hang beside them like a useless oar.

This white-winged traveller is clumsy and weak !  
His beauty has become a comic sight !  
A seaman with his briar jabs his beak,  
Another counterfeits his limping gait !

The bard is like the sovereign of the clouds  
Who rides the storm and mocks the archer's aim ;  
Exiled on earth among the jeering crowds,  
It is his giant's wings that make him lame.

*SONNET: CONTEMPLATION*

*(From the French of Baudelaire.)*

Be wise, my Sorrow, trust more in repose.  
You besought Evening; he has floated down :  
A veil of darkness ovespreads the town,  
To these men bringing peace, and care to those.

While the dull mob goes reeling on its course,  
Beneath the murderer Pleasure's cruel blows,  
And in the servile feast plucks new remorse,  
My Sorrow, give me your hand, quit their vain shows,

And come with me. Behold each long-dead year  
Lean from the walls of heaven in faded gear;  
Behold Regret risen smiling from the deep;

The sun beneath an arch in slumber bowed,  
And hear, my darling Sorrow, hear sweet Night creep  
Across the eastern sky, like a long shroud.

*SONNET: MISFORTUNE*

*(From the French of Baudelaire.)*

To raise so ponderous a weight,  
Sisyphus, all but you would fail !  
Although the heart be set on toil,  
Long is Art's life, and short Time's date.

Far-off from every famous tomb,  
Towards a solitary grave,  
My heart goes beating notes of grief,  
As though it were a muffled drum.

—Many a gem lies buried deep  
In darkness and oblivious sleep,  
Beyond the reach of pick or line;

Many a flower breathes with regret  
Perfume mysteriously sweet  
Among profoundest shadows lone.

## G. M. H. Raper

### *GALE WARNING*

My sweet, believe me, there are signs  
That canker bites the root, that leaves wither,  
As clouds above hot sunsets. Though you are mine,  
What links, oh, my beloved, can hold in tether  
Your heart and mine together?

I have heard the grating of the thunder's teeth,  
Mouthing his prey, contemplating the end  
Of our white destiny, of our untimely death.  
I have not been deaf to the hot-mouthed winds,  
That flatter, and after, rend.

This, then, as pledge; for when the sleet  
Drenches the soil, or shelter yet may be  
In the roots renewed with strength, in the freshened beat  
Of earth's pulse; the storm-braved ecstasy—  
Love's proof, the flowering tree.

## M. J. Shanks

### *WOODSTOCK*

Lines of blue smoke above the naked field  
Proclaimed the passing of the Summer's pride,  
And the rich grain the heedless acres yield  
Lay in the barn there, where the huntsmen ride.  
The greyness of the beech-trees by the way  
And of the walls and houses of the town,  
Showed that September in her dotage lay  
And here the Cotswolds came into their own.  
Here I drew rein, and though 't was long ago  
And but one moment of an Autumn morn,  
The beauty of that moment is not lost;  
And I can still feel the careless glow  
Of that first flowering of the arrogant dawn,  
That momentary sparkle of the frost.

### *ETHER*

Ice-cold at Aviemore in the white Cairngorms,  
Distilled from the pine-woods trembling o'er the lake,  
From desolate heather under the eagle's eyrie,  
Lonely and pure, the spring in its wake.

Blustering over Dartmoor, blunted by granite,  
Down Devon lanes, passionate and free;  
Salt at Tower Bridge, over smoky steamers,  
Heavy with the tang of the billowing sea.

All-pervading spirit, moody and majestic,  
Tempestuous stranger, stirrer of the mind,  
I salute you, dancer on the mountain,  
Bird-lover, breath-bestower, life-giving wind.

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